

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 484

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (MORGAN, THOMAS E)

SUBJECT: VISIT OF CODEL MORGAN TO ATHENS

REF: ATHENS 360 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: DURING THEIR VISIT HERE, MEMBERS OF CODEL MORGAN (CHAIRMAN MORGAN OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOUNTAIN, BROOMFIELD, FINDLEY, WINN AND LAGOMARSINO) MET WITH THE GREEK PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COORDINATION AND PLANNING (REFTEL). THEIR DISCUSSIONS, MEMBERS OF CODEL EXPLAINED THE STATUS IN CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE BILL AND IN THIS RESPECT, STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE THAT THERE BE EARLY MOVEMENT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. IN THIS CONNECTION, THEY INDICATED THEY HAD MADE THE SAME POINT IN ANKARA AND CAME AWAY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE TURKS WERE READY TO NEGOTIATE. FOR THEIR PART, THE GREEK LEADERS POINTED OUT THAT THE GREEK SIDE HAS ALL ALONG BEEN WILLING AND READY TO NEGOTIATE BUT THE TURKISH SIDE HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ABSENCE OF ANY PROGRESS TO DATE. END SUMMARY.

2. MEMBERS OF THE CODEL, ACCOMPANIED BY AMB KUBISCH, MET FIRST WITH FORMIN BITSIOS AND COORDINATION AND PLANNING MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS FOR LITTLE OVER AN HOUR,
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FOLLOWING WHICH THEY MET WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS

AND PAPLIGOURAS FOR ANOTHER HOUR OR SO. BOTH MEETINGS COVERED PRETTY MUCH THE SAME GROUND. CHAIRMAN MORGAN RECALLED HIS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH GREEK AFFAIRS AS A MEMBER OF CONGRESS AND THE SUPPORT HE HAD GIVEN GREECE OVER THE YEARS. HE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF CODEL EXPRESSED THEIR PLEASURE WITH RETURN OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT TO GREECE AND PRAISED THE ROLE OF PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS IN THIS RESPECT. DURING BOTH MEETINGS, MEMBERS OF CODEL MADE IT CLEAR THAT WHEREAS THEY HAD GREEK-AMERICAN CONSTITUENTS, THEY HAD NONE WHO WERE OF TURKISH ORIGIN, AND THAT THEIR VIEWS ON THE ISSUES BEING DISCUSSED WERE DETERMINED BY THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES, AS THEY SAW THEM, AND THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF A UNITED AND STRONG NATO, NOT ONLY FOR THE US BUT ALSO FOR GREECE AND TURKEY, IN THE FACE OF A COMMON ENEMY. MEMBERS OF CODEL OPENLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THEY HAD ALL SUPPORTED THE PARTIAL LIFTING OF THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO.

3. IN HIS OPENING REMARKS AT EACH MEETING, CHAIRMAN MORGAN DESCRIBED THE PURPOSE OF THE CODEL'S TRIP. HE SAID THAT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (HCIR) IS MARKING UP THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE BILL. IN BRINGING THE LEGISLATION TO THE FLOOR, IT WAS HOPED THAT ANOTHER BITTER DEBATE SUCH AS OCCURRED LAST YEAR COULD BE AVOIDED. IT WAS IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT THE CODEL HAVE SOME ASSURANCES THAT THERE WOULD BE MOVEMENT ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION AND THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BEGIN SOON SO THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A DESTRUCTIVE DEBATE AND PUNISHING AMENDMENTS. IN THIS CONNECTION THE CHAIRMAN, AND THE OTHER CONGRESSMEN, STRESSED THE VITAL IMPORTANCE TO GREECE, TO TURKEY AND TO THE US OF THE STRENGTH AND VITALITY OF THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF NATO. THEY POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAD NOT COME TO TWIST ARMS OR THREATEN BUT HOPED TO HELP FIND A SOLUTION.

4. MEMBERS OF THE CODEL SAID THEY HAD WORKED HARD FOR THE PARTIAL LIFTING OF THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO IN THE HOPE THAT IT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TOWARD PROGRESS IN FINDING A SOLUTION IN CYPRUS. THEY STATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE DESIRED RESULTS HAD NOT YET OCCURRED. CHAIRMAN MORGAN HAD THOUGHT IT ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO VISIT TURKEY AND GREECE

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AND HAD INSISTED ON COMING AHEAD DESPITE A PAINFUL INJURY AT THE OUTSET OF THE TRIP FROM WHICH HE STILL SUFFERED. IN ANKARA MEMBERS OF THE CODEL HAD EXPLAINED THE SITUATION IN THE CONGRESS AND THE IMPORTANCE THAT THERE BE SOME PROGRESS WITH RESPECT TO NEGOTIATIONS ON CYPRUS. THEY FELT THEY HAD MADE AN IMPRESSION ON THE TURKS AND CAME AWAY BELIEVING THAT THEY HAD CONVINCED THE TURKS THAT THE TIME TO NEGOTIATE IS HERE AND THAT THE TURKS ARE READY

TO NEGOTIATE. ONE CONGRESSMAN MENTIONED THAT HE HAD CONCLUDED FROM THEIR DISCUSSIONS IN ANKARA THAT IF NEGOTIATIONS WERE RESUMED THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO COMETO SOME AGREEMENT SATISFOACTORY TO GREECE, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS NOT TO ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS.

5. IN RESPONDING TO CODEL, PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, AND HIS TWO MINISTERS EARLIER, COMMENTED ALONG SIMILAR LINES. THEIR RESPONSES WERE ESSENTIALLY "WE HOPE YOU ARE RIGHT BUT FROM OUR PAST EXPERIENCE WE DOUBT IT," AND THEN WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THEIR PAST ESPERIENCES IN THIS RESPECT. THE GREEKS REPEATEDLY STRESSED THAT THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED, WILLING AND READY TO NEGOTIATE TO FIND A SETTLEMENT (AND FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIIOS MENTIONED THE HELPFUL ROLE OF THE SECRETARY O STATE IN THIS RESPECT). IN THE FIRST MEETING, BITSIOS REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS OVER THE PASTYEAR AND DESCRIBED INDETAIL HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH CAGLAYANGIL IN PARIS AND MORE RECENTLY IN BRUSSELS. DESPITE THE UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED AT BRUSSELS AND THE READINESS OF THE GREEK SIDE TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS ANYTIME AFTER JAN 15, THE TURKISH SIDE HAD NOT YET GIVEN A CLEAR ANSWER, IN FACT IT HAD INDICATED ITS RELUCTANCE TO BEGIN THE TALKS BEFORE FEB 16 AND ALSO WAS OPPOSED TO NEW YORK AS THE VENUE. BITSIOS CONCLUDED THAT HE REGRETTED THAT HE COULD NOT SAY THERE HAD BEEN ANY PROGRESS, EVEN OF A PROCEDURAL NATURE.

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6. THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT SOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM WAS NOT DIFFICULT, IN FACT IT WAS EASY IF THE STANDARDS OF REASON WERE APPLIED. HE SAID THE GREEK SIDE, AS THE AGGRIEVED PARTY, COULD HAVE TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THERE SHOULD BE A RETURN TO THE STATUS QUO ANTE. INSTEAD, THE GREEKS HAD SHOWN THEIR SINCERITY AND GOOD FAITH BY BEING WILLING TO NEGOTIATE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. IN EFFECT, THE GREEKS HAD ALREADY ACCEPTED THE TURKISH POSITIONS REGARDING A SETTLEMENT BY AGREEING TO A GEOGRAPHIC FEDERATION WITH A WEAK CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AS THE FRAMEWORK (ALTHOUGH THEY HAD NOT DONE SO YET FORMALLY IN THE NEGOTIATING FORUM). THEY HAD TO INSIST, HOWEVER, THAT THE TERRITORY CONTROLLED BY EACH COMMUNITY HAD TO BE PROPORTIONALLY RELATIVE TO THE SIZE OF THE RESPECTIVE POPULATIONS.

7. THE PRIME MINISTER REVIEWED FOR THE CODEL, IN SOME DETAIL, THE HISTORY OF THE CYPRUS TRAGEDY BEGINNING WITH THE JUNTA'S COUP AGAINST MAKARIOS IN JULY 1974. HE SAID THE TURKS HAD USED THEIR RIGHTS AS A GUARANTOR POWER AS A PRETEXT FOR THE FIRST INVASION BUT HAD NO LEGITIMATE EXCUSE FOR THE SECOND MILITARY ACTION WHICH SUGGESTED STRONGLY THAT THEY HAD ENTERED CYPRUS WITH THE GOAL OF OCCUPATION, ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY APPLIED A READY-MADE MILITARY PLAN. DESPITE ALL THIS, THE GREEKS WERE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE--BUT THE TURKS KEPT FINDING EXCUSES TO POSTPONE NEGOTIATIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER THEN REFERRED TO

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THE AEGEAN PROBLEM AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF GREEK REASONABLENESS AND TURKISH INTRANSIGENCE. EVEN HERE, WHERE THE GREEKS COULD ARGUE FOR PRESERVATION OF THE STATUS QUO AND THAT NO PROBLEM EXISTED, HE HAD OFFERED TO TAKE THE MATTER TO INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE. IN FACT, HE HAD BEEN SO MODERATE AND CONCILIATORY THAT HE WAS PROVOKING INCREASING CRITICISM ON THE PART OF THE GREEK PEOPLE. THE PRIME MINISTER ENDED BY STRESSING THE URGENCY OF FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND THE OTHER GREEK-TURKISH ISSUES AND THAT TO DO SO, A WAY MUST BE FOUND TO GET THE TURKS TO RESPOND. OTHERWISE, HE FELT THERE WAS A REAL DANGER OF WAR.

8. THERE WAS ALSO SOME DISCUSSIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE BILL. CHAIRMAN MORGAN ASSURED THE GREEKS THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAD DELIBERATELY LEFT THE GREEK AND TURKISH AID SECTIONS OUT OF THE BILL DURING THE PRE-RECESS MARK UP, EVERYBODY KNEW THAT BOTH WOULD HAVE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL BILL. HE SAID WE KNOW YOU NEED THIS ASSISTANCE AND WANT TO HELP YOU, BUT, HE POINTED OUT, IT WAS ALSO IMPORTANT TO AVOID CONFLICT. FOR THIS REASON, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GET THE NEGOTIATIONS ON CYPRUS STARTED. COORDINATION MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS ALLUDED TO GREECE'S

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, WHICH ARE AGGRAVATED BY THE NEED TO MAINTAIN LARGE DEFENSE EXPENDITURES (7% OF GNP) IN VIEW OF THE SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO TURKEY. HE SAID THAT AS THE PRIME MINISTER HAD STATED IN PARLIAMENT, GREECE WANTS TO BE STRONG, NOT ONLY AS A THREAT AGAINST POSSIBLE TURKISH ADVENTURES, BUT ALSO IN ORDER TO MEET ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE IN THE EVENT OF A GENERAL CONFLAGRATION. ALTHOUGH GREECE NOW HAD A PERCAPITA INCOME OF \$2,200 AND WAS NO LONGER UNDERDEVELOPED, IT WAS STILL NOT HIGHLY INDUSTRIALIZED. MOREOVER, IT FACED CRITICAL SOCIAL DEMANDS AND IF SOCIAL UNREST WAS TO BE AVOIDED IT NEEDED ASSISTANCE. TURKEY FACED SIMILAR PROBLEMS, HE SAID, WITH WHICH GREECE SYMPATHIZED AND HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE GREEKS SAW NO COMPETITION WITH TURKEY IN THIS SENSE.

9. DURING HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE CONGRESSMEN, THE PRIME MINISTER TRIED TO CONVEY TO THEM THE VERY CLEAR MESSAGE THAT DESPITE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE US AND GREECE
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BECAUSE OF US POLICY DURING THE JUNTA YEARS AND WITH RESPECT TO CYPRUS, GREECE REMAINED ATTACHED TO THE WEST AND WANTED CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE US. BOTH MY GOVERNMENT AND I, HE TOLD CONGRESSMEN, WISH TO HAVE THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE COOPERATION WITH YOUR COUNTRY. PRIME MINISTER INDICATED, HOWEVER, IN RESPONSE TO THE WORDS OF PRAISE FOR HIS ROLE EXPRESSED BY THE CONGRESSMEN, THAT IT WAS NOT ENOUGH FOR HIS TASK TO BE APPRECIATED; HE NEEDED MORAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT AS WELL TO STABILIZE THE SITUATION IN GREECE. HE SAID HE NEEDS TO ESTABLISH A SAFE AND SOUND DEMOCRACY, FOLLOWING THE SEVEN YEARS OF DICTATORSHIP. TO DO THAT HE MUST OVERCOME SOME SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES: CYPRUS, DIFFERENCES WITH TURKEY, THE ECONOMY, AND THE CREATION OF INSTITUTIONS TO PRESERVE DEMOCRACY IN GREECE. HE CONCLUDED THIS PART OF HIS REMARKS BY SAYING HE IS CERTAIN THAT IF GREECE MEETS THESE CHALLENGES OVER THE NEXT TWO TO THREE YEARS, IT WILL HAVE THE STRONGEST DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE, AND THE US WILL HAVE IN HIM THE BEST POSSIBLE PERSON WITH WHOM TO WORK AND COOPERATE.

10. COMMENT: ALL IN ALL, THE VISIT OF CODEL MORGAN TO ATHENS WAS EXTREMELY USEFUL. THE CODEL TOOK AN EVEN-HANDED APPROACH TO THE QUESTION OF RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS ON CYPRUS BY ASKING THE GREEKS, AS THEY HAD ASKED THE TURKS, TO HELP. THIS DID NOT SIT EASILY WITH THE GREEKS WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES THE AGGRIEVED PARTY WHICH HAS BEEN WILLING AND READY TO SEE THE NEGOTIATIONS RESUMED AND WHICH FEELS THE TURKISH SIDE

HAS BEEN FINDING CONSTANT EXCUSES TO DELAY OR HINDER THE NEGOTIATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, WE UNDERSTAND FROM A MEMBER OF THE PRIME MINISTERS PERSONAL STAFF THAT HE WAS QUITE PLEASED WITH HIS DISCUSSION WITH THE CONGRESSMEN. FOR THEIRPART, THE CONGRESSMEN APPEARED, AT LEAST AT FIRST, TO BE SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED WITH THEIR MEETINGS HERE, FEELING THE GREEKS WERE UNDULY NEGATIVE AND CONCERNED ABOUT PLACING BLAME ON THE TURKS. BY THE TIME OF THEIR DEPARTURE, HOWEVER, THEY RECOGNIZED THAT THAY HAD ACCOMPLISHED ABOUT AS MUCH AS THEY COULD AT THIS STAGE. AS ONE MEMBER CONCLUDED, THE CYPRUS PROBLEM IS SO DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX THE CONGRESS SHOULD STAY OUT OF IT. CONFIDENTIAL

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11. CODEL MORGAN RECEIVED MODERATE COVERAGE IN THE ATHENS NEWS MEDIA. A FILM OF THE CODEL'S MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER WAS SHOWN AT PRIME TIME ON THE EVENING TV NEWS JAN 13 AND THERE WERE ALSO PICTURES OF THE CONGRESSMEN WITH THE PRIME MINISTER IN SEVERAL OF THE NEWSPAPERS JAN 14. NEWS REPORTS ON THE VISIT WERE BASICALLY LIMITED TO REMARKS THAT CHAIRMAN MORGAN MADE AS THE CODEL WAS LEVING THE PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN USEFUL AND INFORMATIVE, AND HAD COVERED SUBJECTS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. KUBISCH

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